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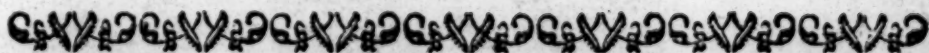


A
NARRATIVE

OF WHAT HAPPENED IN

B E N G A L,

In the Year MDCCCLX.



1760



NARRATIVE



OF THE

PROCEEDINGS

OF THE

COMMISSIONERS



A
NARRATIVE
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IN the latter end of the month of November, 1759, Colonel Caillaud arrived at Fort William, with a reinforcement of troops from Fort St. George, to succeed Colonel Clive and Colonel Ford in the command of the army in Bengal; both of whom, in the month of February following, quitted India to return to Europe.

The disputes with the Dutch were entirely by this time at an end; yet the Eng-

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lish troops still continued in the field ; for it was thought necessary by Colonel Clive, now, when he could do it with security, to send another detachment to the northward, to aid the Nabob in opposing the incursions of the Shah Zadah upon the borders of his dominions.

Early as this month the Shah Zadah, reviving his former plan, began to entertain the same views, which had been defeated, the preceding campaign, by the activity and enterprize of Colonel Clive. An unpardonable negligence on one side, and the usual and known caprice of the people of the country, ever aspiring after novelty, on the other, afforded both the time and means he wished for, and encouraged him with no unreasonable expectation of a happy turn in his favour.

From the time Colonel Clive left the field, no troops had been sent by Ramharain, the governor of Patna ; nor were there any other measures taken by him to re-establish the tranquillity, or to secure the confines of the province. The petty Rajas of the inferior districts were disregarded ; and while the whole country remained unsettled, and every man was setting up for himself, these
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people, utterly neglected and unobserved, naturally embraced the lucky moment to assert an independence, and afterwards united with that power they trusted could best support them in it. There were some, whom a proper ascendancy exerted upon would have still kept in awe, and preserved faithful to their duty; but, unrestrained by any authority, they readily closed with the offers which were not wanting to be made them from the opposite party. Others again, and these not a few or contemptible, sent secret and repeated invitations to the Prince, and assurances of support whenever he should exert himself: These were a people studious only of their own advantage, eager to perplex, and to profit from the misfortune of the times, and prepared to join with any side, that should prove most powerful.

From such errors, and such dispositions in the people, the party of the Shah Zadah, at the latter end of the year 1759, began insensibly to be restored, and his faction to extend; inconsiderable in the beginning, and so weak, that had a body of one thousand horse only been properly disposed, they might have then done what forty thousand proved insufficient for afterwards, and the

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name of the Shah Zadah would have been no more heard of.

About this time was another favourable incident, which contributed more than all the rest to augment the number of his friends, to add dignity to his name, and to assemble fresh followers to his standard.

The present young and enterprizing Vazier Gauze Odin, Khan, by the murder of a former King, exalted Allum Geer, the father of the Shah Zadah, to the throne of Indostan: but some time after, being dissatisfied with his own election in the person of this prince, he imprisoned him, kept him in close confinement for several years, drove his children (among the rest Shah Zadah) from Delly; and at length, to compleat the system, he murdered him also, and proclaimed another Prince at that capital.

When the news of his father's assassination reached the Shah Zadah, he did not long delay to assert his title to the inheritance of his ancestors. He caused himself to be acknowledged King immediately by his dependants, and was recognized as such by his followers; and he demanded homage and obeisance from the Nabob of Bengal. His right to the crown being incontestably a
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just one, many principal Rajas were on that consideration induced to unite with him, to support his pretensions to his paternal diadem. Thus, at the commencement of the year 1760, did he find himself at the head of an army of thirty thousand men, with a much stronger and more popular claim than formerly, and burst into the Nabob's dominions, impatient to retrieve the mortifying disappointment of his last campaign.

In this manner were affairs circumstanced, when an English detachment of four hundred men, with six field-pieces, and one battalion of Seapoys, commanded by Colonel Caillaud, joined to fifteen thousand horse and foot, and twenty-five pieces of cannon, under the eldest son of the Nabob, moved from Maidavad on the 18th of January, towards Patna. The army having gained the passes of Suleliagarrie, which divide the kingdom of Bengal from the province of Bahar, by the 30th, were detained there seven or eight days in a negotiation with the Raja of Perriah, a person whom there will be again occasion to mention; who, from some difference between the Nabob and him, had collected forces to the amount of six or seven thousand men, and threatened to declare for the

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the Shah Zadah. Colonel Caillaud, unwilling at such a juncture to leave an enemy in his rear, interposed to effect a reconciliation; their disputes were for a short time amicably compromised, and the armies again were permitted to pursue their march.

The Shah Zadah during this had penetrated as far as Patna, with design to attack Raja Ramnarain, the governor of that city, before he could be assisted by the forces then marching from Muxadabad. Ramnarain, tho' he had been so inattentive to the enemy at a distance, and so unmindful of the real interest of his master, was now amply provided for his defence, and to oppose his farther progress. He had compleated his forces in December, when the danger had become more immediate, to the number of forty thousand men, with twenty pieces of cannon: he was reinforced with seventy Europeans, two field-pieces, and a battalion of Seapoys, under the command of Lieutenant Cockran, from the English factory; and the Shah Zadah found this army encamped under the walls of the city. Upon his approach, Ramnarain moved something nearer to him, and the two camps were many days within a short distance of each other; but nothing
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more passed but a few skirmishes between small parties ; for Colonel Caillaud had written peremptory instructions to Ramnarain, to protract the time by every means in his power, and upon no consideration whatsoever to hazard a battle till his arrival. The same was the purport of the Nabob his master's positive orders to him ; and for a little while he prudently observed them, and kept entrenched within strong lines, purposely to avoid an action. But long before their junction with him could be formed, the rash inconsiderate man, though at that very time he had reason to be jealous of the fidelity of many of the commanders, yet deluded by some imaginary advantage, elated with his superiority of forces, or dazzled by the splendor of an expected victory, the honour of which would devolve solely to himself ; big with these vain expectations, he on the 9th of February drew out his army, offered battle, which was accepted, fought the Shah Zadah, and, in just punishment of his presumption, lost the day.

To do justice to his personal conduct, it must be owned, Ramnarain behaved with distinguished gallantry, fighting hand to hand with one of Shah Zadah's principal officers ;
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he was wounded in several parts of his body, and lost two fingers of his right hand. The chief cause of the defeat was posting the English troops too far from his person, and the desertion of the three most powerful Rajas of his party; one of them fell upon the English, another fell upon the rear, and the other rode clear off in the heat of the action: By the defection of these, the remainder of his troops after a short resistance fled, and left him defended only by a few of his household. Assailed on all sides, the elephant he was mounted upon kneeling, and the howdah almost off from his back, at last reduced to the utmost extremity, he was forced to send to the English for succour.

Lieutenant Cockran, Ensign Winklebleck, and Mr. Barwell (a young gentleman of the English factory, who went that day a volunteer to the battle) instantly marched to his relief with four hundred Seapoys. This little body pierced thro' every obstacle to his aid, and attacking with great spirit the party he was surrounded by, gave him time to recover, disengaged him, and favoured his retreat into Patna. They still pushed their advantage with great impetuosity for some time

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time after his escape, again and again repulsing fresh parties which advanced towards them, and at length attempted to re-unite themselves to their own body: but before they could accomplish this, Cockran, Winklebeck, and Barwell were killed; and the Seapoys being left without an officer, the horse broke in among them, and cut most of them to pieces, only one surviving Serjeant, and twenty-five Seapoys escaping. The rest of the English troops, when they saw the day was irrecoverably lost, made good their retreat to the city, having done so much mischief where they engaged, that the enemy would not venture to approach them, but opening instantly to the left and right, let them pass without interruption. They left indeed one field-piece spiked up behind them, which broke down during the engagement. Thus concluded the battle of Mussempoore, in consequence of which the Shah Zadah without delay invested Patna.

This siege was but of a very short duration; for Ramnarain, though severely wounded, yet did his utmost to defend the city, and at the same time politically contrived to deceive the Shah Zadah, by a true Gentoo spirit of negotiating, sometimes soothing
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him with the hopes of a surrender, and by various other pretences amused him, until Colonel Caillaud and the young Nabob, by continued and forced marches, arrived on the 19th of February within twenty-eight miles of Patna. Alarmed at this sudden and unexpected approach, the Prince, now obliged hastily to withdraw his army from before the town, determined without hesitation to advance towards the Nabob, and force him to an immediate battle. He struck his camp the very next morning, and approached the same day within a very short distance of the young Nabob's advanced posts. The day following the relicks of Lieutenant Cockran's Seapoys having joined the English troops, Colonel Caillaud advised attacking the enemy directly; but the aspect of the stars not just then smiling on the young Nabob, who forgot not, on so critical an occasion, to divine their influence by his astrologers, the attack was deferred till the 22d, when they promised to be more propitious. Accordingly on the 22d, early in the morning, the army marched towards the enemy; but before they arrived near their camp, the morning was so far spent by the insufferable delays of the Nabob's march,

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march, that Colonel Caillaud was obliged to defer his intention of bringing on a battle until the following day, that he might have time enough before him; but encamped within two or three miles of the enemy, as near as he could well approach without alarming them too much. During the time the tents were pitching, he rode towards the camp of the enemy, to observe their position, and to view the situation of the intervening ground. Perceiving all quiet on their side, he took possession of two villages about a mile in the front of his own camp, but situated rather obliquely with respect to that of the enemy, and nearly the same distance from their centre. In each of these villages was posted a company of Seapoys, and the remainder of the same battalion four hundred paces in their rear, to support them in case of an alarm. By some flying parties of horse, the enemy presently discerned the near approach the English troops had made towards them; upon which they brought up some pieces of cannon in their front. To answer this, the battalion of Seapoys was ordered to move up, and a piquet of Europeans, with two six-pounders, were detached from the

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camp, to maintain the villages. After this both sides remained quiet for an hour; at the expiration of that time, notice was sent from the villages, that the enemy was seen to be in motion on all sides; and the Colonel, hastening to an eminence on the left, found that they had struck their camp, and were actually in full march. A considerable body of horse, rising soon after from behind a small hill on the right, and making directly towards the villages, confirmed beyond a doubt their design to bring on an action that day. Orders were therefore given instantly for the English troops to march and form. On their arrival at the chosen ground, they were formed between the two above-mentioned villages, the Europeans in the centre, the Seapoys divided upon the right and left of them, the artillery in the intervals, the villages, with a company of Seapoys in each, being upon the flanks of the whole; and in this order, as the enemy seemed determined to attack, Colonel Caillaud resolved to receive them.

The young Nabob, by a very easy and simple disposition, before agreed on, and what the nature of the ground seemed to invite him to, was with his troops to have
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formed a second line, with a body of horse to cover each flank. From this order, the first line of the English, with the villages, would have secured his front, and his wings only would have been left exposed; so that the enemy must first have broke through the English, or have suffered a severe fire upon their flank in coming round to attack him. But regardless of all this, he crowded his army in a confused multitude upon the right; nor would the most pressing and repeated solicitations induce him to alter his disposition, or to display his troops in a more distinct order; but there they remained, a body of fifteen thousand men, with a front of scarce two hundred yards, in a tumultuous ununiformed heap; and to this inflexibility had he very near sacrificed both himself and people.

The enemy came on with much spirit, though with some irregularity, and in many separate bodies, after the Eastern manner of fighting. In appearance they directed their principal effort to the left of the English, having stationed one large body there in the beginning, and now pushing another to support them. To give some check to these, the artillery were advanced a few paces in the front,

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front, and being directed to the left, a few discharges effectually broke the order of their approach on that side. Unable to withstand so hot a fire, they divided: some filed off to the right of the English; but the most part still kept inclining, under cover of some banks and ditches, more and more towards the left, until at last they got quite round; there they remained for some time, for an object of much more importance now converted all attention on the other side.

The enemy had long descried the young Nabob, from the number of horse, elephants, and standards, with which he was encircled. Their motion to the left appeared a feint only to amuse the English; while, led on by the most resolute commanders, they bore down with the best and bravest of their troops against the young Nabob. This being observed, all the artillery was ordered to be drawn up upon the right, which, together with five or six large cannon in the front of the Nabob, fired briskly, as the first body of the enemy came on in a long and deep column; but four guns, by the roughness of the ground, breaking down after a few discharges, and the Nabob's
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cannon being quickly deserted, it produced little effect. Both sides were now closely engaged. The enemy were received by the Nabob with resolution : they charged in a tumultuous manner, horse and foot indiscriminately mixed, and with variety of weapons, arrows, pikes, swords, matchlocks, &c. In about ten minutes the Nabob began to give way ; the enemy pressed on, while the Nabob only acted on the defensive.

At this critical juncture, Colonel Caillaud ordered up a battalion of Seapoys from his right, and led them on to succour the Nabob. The Seapoys marched and drew up within forty yards upon the enemy's flank ; they poured in one levelled fire, then a second ; after which they pushed on with their bayonets, and so much disconcerted the enemy, already confused enough in making the attack, that they recoiled upon each other, and part immediately fled. The Nabob's horse recovered by this seasonable relief, galloped in amongst them at the very instant of their confusion, and dispersed the rest : none of them ever attempted to rally, and the whole plain was as clear
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in half an hour, as if no enemy had been near it.

Whilst they were thus repulsed in front, the party, which at first had advanced on the left, marched round to the rear unobserved in the heat of the battle, and plundered the English camp: but most of the things, elephants, camels, &c. were recovered again in the pursuit, which the approach of the night prevented continuing beyond two or three miles. The action lasted near four hours, and a very considerable number fell on each side; but the rout was compleat. The English lost a few Seapoys only, and they took seventeen pieces of cannon. Of note among the slain, were an uncle of the young Nabob's, and the two commanders of the Shah Zadah, who led on the attack: The young Nabob himself received two wounds in his face and neck with arrows.

Very little, if any advantage whatever was derived from the victory of Seerpoon (so was the place called where this battle was fought) further than striking the enemy with a momentary fright; nor did even their apprehensions subsist. The young Nabob esteeming his wounds (though slight scratches

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scratches only) of a most dangerous tendency, immediately after the battle retired to Patna, would neither pursue the Shah Zadah himself, nor would he suffer part of the horse to march with Colonel Caillaud, who instantly and earnestly urged him to it, and offered, with any addition of horse to his own small body, to follow the Shah Zadah, and while his troops were scattered, in amazement at their late defeat, and without a head, to exterminate him from the province. Through jealousy, anxious lest the reputation of the Colonel should increase, to the extenuation of his own; or unwilling to crush an enemy at once, whom he was certain he could always reduce with the help of his English allies; an enemy too, by whose existence alone he retained the power he then possessed, and the large army he then commanded; or from such sinister motives, he absolutely refused to let him have a single man. Thus were those precious moments lost, from the neglect of which have sprung all the mischiefs which have since ensued. Colonel Caillaud ordered his troops to encamp between Patna and the town of Bahaar:

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the Nabob remained in Patna, and buried himself among his women.

The same night of his defeat, the Shah Zadah fled to the town of Bahaar, ten miles only from the field of battle. The two following days restored to him the greatest part of his dissipated forces, whom their own terrors, more than the reality of the danger, had dispersed. Upon recollecting his own spirits, encouraging those of his people, and upon a review of his army, he found his affairs very far as yet from being in a desperate condition. Not many of his forces were missing, there was no enemy near him, he had the same resources as before, and the country was as open to him as ever. Moved by these considerations, he was resolved immediately to undertake some sudden expedition, before any suspicion could be formed of his loss being so soon repaired, or the truth of his designs could be explored. Among the many expedients which presented themselves, he fixed on one, which, at the same time it evinced the propriety of his judgment, and shewed that he did not want talents to improve a happy opportunity, had every probable appearance of success; and was certainly the likeliest means,

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means, if not to compleat his views, at least to improve the nature of his circumstances; and experience would have proved the truth of this, had the spirit, which first inspired the thought, accompanied him in the execution of it.

The young Nabob, having afforded the enemy all the leisure he wanted, and at last fatiated with his pleasures, thought it was now time to observe what the Shah Zadah had been doing. Accordingly he joined Col. Caillaud with his army on the 29th of February, and made a slow march or two towards Bahaar: but his surprize was great, when he heard the Prince was in the field again, and not at Bahaar, but had made two forced marches beyond him towards Bengal. Colonel Caillaud had long before predicted the possibility of this manoeuvre to him; but he remained utterly incredulous, nor used any precaution to prevent such an attempt, and, when convinced of the truth of it, only wondered how such an amazing turn had happened.

The enemy having made two forced marches with an intention to enter Bengal, (to which they had often been invited by many disaffected Rajas, particularly Cud-

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deim Houffsein Khan, the Raja of Parneah, who had again revolted) obliged the young Nabob to make all imaginable haste after them, and, if possible, to prevent their progress. Colonel Caillaud marched his troops directly towards the river, and embarked them on board the boats, which at that time accompanied the army, and left the young Nabob and his forces to make what expedition they could after him. The Nabob was obliged to exert himself on this occasion; and luckily on the third day, the enemy, as their rout lay by the river side, were by the English and the Nabob's horse overtaken. The Shah Zadah from this instance perceived at once the impossibility of his marching into Bengal by the direct road which leads along the banks of the Ganges, because the English, by means of their boats transporting them down the river, could at any time possess themselves of the passes, which are the entrance into Bengal on that side, before them; by which means the young Nabob would remain in his rear, and he should be shut up between two armies. Yet, far from being deterred by this obstacle, he persevered in his resolution, and on the 8th of March, changing

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changing his course, he directed his rout over that range of mountains, which divide the Nabob's dominions to the Southward from a country North-East of the Decan, and as yet but little known. His forces consisting now of light horse only, uncumbered by artillery or heavy baggage, he easily gained two or three marches on the Nabob. Where-ever he went, there was a necessity of keeping to him as close as possible: Colonel Caillaud therefore continued to follow him; and he led them through a country ever before deemed inaccessible to an army, from the number of thick woods and narrow passes, which considerably retarded their progress, and rendered their motions extremely difficult. The passage of one pass in particular detained the Shah Zadah so long, that the English troops arrived on the 22d of March on the encampment he had quitted but two days before, the regularity of their march having carried them through in a much shorter time: the interval likewise spent in this transaction gave time for the advices to reach Muxadabad, and enabled the old Nabob to collect an army, and, sustained by two hundred Europeans detached to his

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his assistance from Fort William, to march out for the preservation of his capital. From this time (till the Prince had entered Bengal) nothing more happened than a series of intricate and toilsome marches after him, in which Colonel Caillaud had successive difficulties to encounter, from the perplexities of the country, for the subsistence of the Nabob's and his own troops, for the conducting the artillery, (whole days being employed in cutting roads to bring it a few miles only) and lastly for directing the rout of the army, for which guides could seldom be procured, the few rude inhabitants of the vallies having fled into the mountains. In the latter end of March the Shah Zadah had advanced within thirty miles West of Muxadabad, on the side of Burdwan's province, to the dismay and astonishment of the inhabitants, most of whom immediately fled. He was there joined by a party of Marattoes, who had lately broke into the country on that side, and with them he intended to enter the city.

But now, when the time was come that called upon the Shah Zadah for the exertion of his utmost fortitude, to execute the very purpose for which he had advanced so far
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and endured so much, such an opportunity too as he ought to have wished for, his constancy forsook him. Either from irresolution, from some dissension among his commanders, perhaps not finding his cause so warmly espoused in the province as he expected, or from whatever motive, he committed an unpardonable and capital error in hesitating to attack the old Nabob immediately, and while the two armies were divided. This delay compleatly ruined his design, at first so masterly concerted, and till then with so much steadiness carried on; for in the mean time Colonel Caillaud and the young Nabob, by constant uninterrupted marches, had time to throw themselves between him and the city. On the 4th of April, the old Nabob and his son formed a junction of their two armies near Burdwan, and Colonel Caillaud detached the two hundred Europeans which accompanied the old Nabob, to Muxadabad, for the defence of that city. The whole force of the Nabob being thus united, he and the Colonel marched without delay to constrain the Prince to retire from Burdwan, and to oblige him, if possible, to leave the country entirely. They found the enemy on the
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7th of April encamped on the opposite side of the Damoodah, a river which runs along the town of Burdwan. It being previously determined to engage him, the English troops, who always formed the van-guard of the army, were preparing to ford the river under cover of their cannon; when the Shah Zadah, observing their disposition, spared them the trouble of completing it, after half an hour's cannonading, by setting fire to his camp, and retreating with precipitation. His hopes of entering the metropolis being once defeated, he was not disposed to venture a battle to attempt it a second time, a risk now become too unequal, considering his inferiority of numbers. He preferred therefore the most prudent alternative, and withdrew from the province by the same track, and with the same haste he entered, over the mountains.

It was now the most natural conjecture, and the sequel proved it such, that the Shah Zadah, on his return to Bahaar, would make another attempt on the city of Patna, before the place could be succoured; all the English garrison, except some Seapoys left for the protection of the factory, having
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been withdrawn after the battle of Seerpoor, to strengthen the detachment.

Attentive to this, Colonel Caillaud on the 16th of April formed a detachment of two hundred chosen Europeans, with two field-pieces, and one battalion of Seapoys, from a re-inforcement which had joined him from Fort William, and gave the command to Captain Knox, an experienced Officer, with instructions to march with all possible speed to the support of Patna.

The remainder of the English detachment, as well as the armies of the Nabob and his son, being exceedingly harrassed and spent with the length and difficulties of their late expedition in the hottest season of the year, were for the present ordered to Muxadabad to quarters of refreshment.

Captain Knox pursued his rout to Patna, which he compassed (three hundred miles) in thirteen days; a surprizing effort, considering the intense heats of the season, and that he crossed the Ganges twice in his march. The Shah Zadah, as he had some days start of Captain Knox, and his troops were wholly composed of cavalry, had reached Patna some time before him, and, as was suspected, laid siege to the city,

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which, from the inconsiderable garrison Ramnarain had to defend it, was reduced almost to the last extremity. The two nights preceding Captain Knox's arrival, the Shah Zadah had made two general assaults. Part of the small body belonging to Mr. Laws, (who had joined him on his return,) with about four hundred of his own people, had forced into the town, but were driven out again by the bravery of those Seapoys and their officers, who had remained in the factory, whom Mr. Amyat the Chief had sent to Ramnarain's assistance. The third night also they were preparing once more for an escalade on all sides, when Captain Knox appeared with a flying party in the evening. His presence so much animated the inhabitants, and dispirited the besiegers, that though they persisted in their attack, they were without much difficulty repulsed. The remainder of Captain Knox's detachment joined him the next day, and he the following morning treated the besiegers with a spirited and well-conducted sally, engaged with success one of their principal officers, and, with the loss of a few men only, drove them from their works entirely, to which they never afterwards returned. The Prince, perceiving

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perceiving his last endeavours rendered ineffectual, was once more compelled to retire with his troops from before Patna, and to retreat, in want of almost every necessary, to the banks of the river Soane, fifty miles West of Patna, where he has remained ever since. This is the third time Patna has been thus critically preserved within a few hours of being lost.

While the fate of that city was depending, Cuddeim Houssein Khan, spoken of above as Raja of Parneah (a province Eastwards of the Ganges) from an antient and irreconcilable animosity subsisting between the young Nabob and him, and from some recent quarrels with the father, from whom, against all justice, he had detained the revenues of Parneah for three preceding years, and taking advantage of the perplexities of his affairs, had kept the country likewise in his own possession, determined (that he might preserve what he had thus acquired, and was unwilling to refund) to throw off all subjection to his master, and attach himself entirely to the faction of the Shah Zadah. For this purpose he was levying an additional body of troops, and procuring a considerable number of boats,

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intending to transport them over the Ganges, whenever a fair opportunity should offer, to join that Prince.

To obviate this was now the Nabob's more immediate view. The English troops, and the army of the young Nabob, were ordered to re-assemble as soon as possible; and they accordingly on the 23d of May rendezvoused at Rajamaul, (a city on the Ganges near the passes of Suhhagurree) and remained encamped there five or six days, until they were certain Cuddeim Houffsein Khan had begun his march on the Parneah side of the river, and waited only for an occasion to cross the river, and join the Shah Zadah. Colonel Caillaud and the young Nabob pushed up on the Bengal side, and Captain Knox was ordered, with part of the garrison he commanded, to pass over the river from Patna, and endeavour to intercept Cuddeim Houffsein Khan, or in any manner he could to distress and harass him on his march. The number of boats Cuddeim Houffsein Khan had been long collecting, being unable to proceed as fast as his army, fell soon after into the hands of the English; for Colonel Caillaud, being apprized of the place where they lay, detached

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tached a battalion of Seapoys, who attacked and burnt them all after a slight resistance, together with a large quantity of powder, stores, and ammunition. Notwithstanding this loss, Cuddeim Houffein Khan still advanced, until he approached very near the place (almost opposite to Patna) where Captain Knox with his party lay. Sensible that his junction with the Prince depended in a great measure on his passing this body, because he was certain that the least delay would bring Colonel Caillaud, who kept boats with him, and his troops ready to cross at a moment's warning, upon his rear; he determined to attack Captain Knox, who being a young gentleman of remarkable gallantry, and eminent for his military services, and as ardent on his part to come to an action, on the 16th of June a very warm one ensued.

Captain Knox, with only two hundred Europeans, one battalion of Seapoys, five field-pieces, and about three hundred horse, maintained himself for six hours, opposed to an army of twelve thousand men, with thirty pieces of cannon: he was surrounded the whole time; but discovering the apparent superiority of the enemy, who were
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never before imagined to be so numerous, he possessed himself of a very strong and advantageous post, and making an excellent disposition of his men, he in the end compelled the enemy to leave the field, with the loss of eight pieces of cannon, three elephants, and between three and four hundred men killed on the spot. The horse had once very nigh broke in upon him, but by the bravery of his own grenadiers were beat off, and he lost no more than fifteen or sixteen men. By this repulse, Cuddeim Houssain Khan, stopt in his progress towards the Prince, was obliged now to take a contrary road, and fled Northward into the district of Butteah. Four or five days after this Colonel Caillaud and the young Nabob crossed the Ganges, to put the finishing stroke to this affair, and to relieve Captain Knox, whose party was esteemed too weak to pursue such numbers. He therefore, with his detachment, was ordered to return again to the garrison at Patna.

After a few days pursuit, the rear of Cuddeim Houssain Khan's army appeared in fight; for he was very slow in his retreat, encumbered with heavy baggage, heavy artillery,

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tillery, and the accumulated treasure of several years rapine and plunder of Parneah. On the 25th of June in the morning, when the armies came in fight of each other, Cuddeim Houffein Khan immediately formed his troops behind some villages and a grove, at the extremity of a large plain. The English drew up upon the plain, and moving to attack the villages, an action commenced by a mutual cannonading. The enemy, by frequent motions along their line, appeared at first inclined to make a charge with their horse: but when the English approached within musket-shot, and had driven them from the villages and grove which they had taken possession of, they fled, and abandoned the remainder of their cannon (twenty-two pieces) and some baggage; and it was at last discovered, that they only intended to amuse the English in front, while they unloaded their treasure from the carriages in the rear, mounted it upon camels and elephants, and conveyed it off. These carriages they also left behind them. The young Nabob and his troops behaved in this skirmish in their usual manner, halting above a mile in the rear, nor ever once made a motion to sustain the English.

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English. Had he but acted on this occasion with the least appearance of spirit, and made even a semblance of fighting, the affair must have proved decisive; nor could Cuddeim Houffsein Khan, or his treasure, have escaped. When the enemy were flying in his sight, he was even afraid to hazard a party in the pursuit, though a very few horse would have been sufficient to have dispersed them. The English, without any horse, fatigued with an eight hours march, and having been under arms the whole day, were incapable to attempt it. The Nabob's inactivity, to give it no worse a name, and the approach of the night, favoured their escape. However, after a little rest from the toils of the day, Colonel Caillaud persisted in the resolution to follow the enemy as long as the season would permit him, (the rains having already begun to set in with excessive violence) and, if possible, by another blow effectually to compleat their ruin. The rout of their flight next day was spread for miles together with tents, carriages, and variety of baggage, which, in their hurry to get off, they could not carry with them, and were obliged to leave behind. Colonel Caillaud
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continued his pursuit four days longer, the army of the young Nabob following him; and the enemy would most probably in a few days more have been overtaken, or have been obliged to abandon their treasure, had not a very singular and uncommon accident, as favourable to the enemy as unfortunate to the Nabob, prevented his proceeding any further, and disappointed every other purpose.

The young Nabob, as he was lying asleep in his tent at midnight, was struck dead, in the midst of a violent storm, by a flash of lightning. This accident happened on the 2d of July; but, though singular in itself, yet no very extraordinary circumstances attended it. The fire pierced thro' the top of his tent, struck upon his left breast, and he perished in the flame, with one or two attendants who sat by him. Colonel Caillaud had the most timely information of this event, and was fortunate enough, from his early intelligence, to prevent the immediate succession of bad events, which was apprehended from the irregular and ungovernable nature of the Nabob's troops. He instantly summoned all the chief commanders of the Nabob's army to

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his camp, assembled them, and, by employing the influence of those more particularly attached to the interest of the English, all dangerous exigencies were at length provided against; the inferior officers were gained over, by promises, to remain quiet; the minds of the people were calmed, and their fears appeased. But he was now obliged to abandon all thoughts of any further military operations on this side. He was fully employed, and it was as much as he could accomplish, to keep the Nabob's army together, who agreeable to their custom, after the death of their leader, threatened immediate dissolution. However, it was at last agreed, that the sole power over the army should be vested in Colonel Caillaud, 'till the sentiments of the old Nabob were known; and the brother of Ramnarain was nominally joined with him in the command. Had the army disbanded once, the whole province of Bahaar must inevitably have been lost, and possessed by the Shah Zadah.

To preserve them in the same temper he had brought them to, and to prevent any further accidents from the levity and unsteadiness of an unconstant multitude,

Colonel

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Colonel Caillaud hurried the army back to Patna, halting only a few days at the town of Button, to oblige the Raja of that place to pay some arrears of revenues due to the Nabob, which the troubles had prevented collecting before. Another reason of this haste arose from the severity of the weather, by this time become so bad by constant rains, and the waters rising to so great a height over the country, that in a few days more (whatever had been his success) he would have been compelled to return; for, since his passing the Ganges, the heavy rains had rendered the tents of the soldiers entirely useless, and the miserable huts of the villages were their only shelter. He therefore conducted both armies back to Patna, and terminated the campaign on the 29th of July, by distributing them into winter-quarters.

The troops had scarcely been settled a month in quarters at Patna, when the change which happened in the government of Fort William by the removal of Mr. Holwell, and the succession of Mr. Vansittart to the presidency, but more particularly the declining condition of the Nabob's affairs after the death of his son, called for the presence of

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Colonel Caillaud in Bengal. The Colonel had already presented a plan to the Nabob, and the council of Fort William, for the re-establishment of the Nabob's affairs, for the appointing a successor to the vacant command of his armies, for the discharging the long-neglected arrears to his troops, for their better maintenance in future, and for the more regular and constant payment of the English troops.

This proposal was calculated for the times, and to be effected with little trouble or disturbance; for the infirm state of the government, rent by intestine divisions, and the unaccountable management of the Nabob, rendered still more intolerable by the incapacity and corruption of his ministers, joined to the precarious tenure by which his own power subsisted (the will and inclinations only of this distressed, injured, and complaining people) would admit of no violent measures, without proceeding to dangerous extremities, and scarce any more at present than a temporary alleviation: but the Colonel's proposals meeting with some obstacles from the Nabob, and much more opposition from the then governor and council, he was at last compelled to leave the
army

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army, and to go down to Fort William, to solicit that some speedy remedies might be applied to evils so alarming, and that he might be enabled, if possible, to take the field again the next season early.

When Colonel Caillaud arrived at Muxadabad, he visited the Nabob, and at his request imparted to him the opinion he had conceived of his present circumstances. He described to him without reserve his unhappy situation both at home and abroad, the pernicious consequences which such a series of bad conduct as had for some time past prevailed, if persevered in, must produce; and he then took occasion to point out to him the means by which he imagined his affairs might be best and soonest restored to their necessary order, and power to himself and content to his subjects procured. The Nabob, after listening with much attention, appeared fully satisfied with the candour, and pleased with the freedom, of the Colonel's declarations; and after having assured him he should consider his advice, he dismissed him with many professions of kindness and esteem; and the Colonel after this, having no further business at Muxadabad, pursued his journey to Fort William.

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The new governor and council of that place had been long impatient for his arrival, to obtain from him a perfect knowledge of their own and the Nabob's affairs to the Northward, and of the country government in general; a subject they had been long considering, as they were very solicitous that some effectual method should be immediately resolved on, to extricate themselves from the ruin, in which the Nabob, by his neglect and weakness, seemed to be very near involving both himself and them.

Mr. Vansittart on his accession to the government, from this one circumstance alone, had many difficulties to contend against. He found that the Nabob, since the departure of Colonel Clive, had continued to entertain suspicions highly injurious to the English, to whom it was evident he was now only attached by his fears, conscious that without their aid he could not any longer support his life or kingdom. Among the many causes of discontent, the following were not the least, or the least complained of.

As the Nabob advanced in years, his tyranny increased, and he became insupportable

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portable to his subjects ; among whom the nobleſſe were diſſatisfied to the laſt degree, inceſſantly engaged in cabal and faction, and reſtrained only by dread of the Engliſh power from depoſing and cutting him off.

The clamours of his ſoldiers at the capital for their pay were perpetual, and reached even to the palace, which they frequently ſurrounded, and ſcaled the walls, to the imminent hazard of his life. The pay of his own forces in the field was in long arrear, and the Engliſh troops were obliged to remain unſatisfied.

No appearances either of policy or œconomy were any longer preſerved, or even pretended. By neglect of the former, every insignificant Raja, who rented the government lands, detained the revenues, or paid them only as he ſaw there was a force to compel him to it, and the more powerful ones were in actual rebellion : by inattention to the latter, what little money came into the treaſury, was no longer employed to uſeful purpoſes, but ſquandered away in licentious luxury.

The unlimited oppreſſions, the exorbitant exactions of his miniſters, whoſe principles were as baſe as the dirt he raiſed them from,

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from, and their inhumanity, extending even to the wanton and unjust deprivation of life, produced an universal odium. Add to this, that people of all degrees hourly exclaimed against the calamities they endured, by the want of provisions; the unheeded distractions of the country having caused a scarcity unknown in the worst of former times, and by which the poor suffered inconceivable miseries.

There was no part of the original treaty with the English, which the Nabob on different occasions had not infringed; and they could no longer pretend to defend his government, or fight his battles, while he neither confided in their councils, nor contributed reciprocally to the support of them.

By maintaining a constant standing force they had exhausted themselves; by which means they could neither make any investment of a cargo to send to Europe, nor, what was an object of much greater importance, could they, while such a system prevailed, give the least assistance to the army before Pondicherry, who were then distressed for money to carry on the siege, and who entirely depended upon supplies from Bengal. For an exigence so
pressing

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pressing as this, it was evidently necessary that some salutary measures should be thought of; and it was obvious too, that the English should not permit to escape such an occasion of endeavouring to secure something for themselves, as well for present supplies, as a security against future accidents of the like nature. Conformable to these principles, a short time after Colonel Caillaud's arrival, a plan was devised, considered, and approved of by the Governor, the Colonel, and the whole Council, who desired the presence of the Nabob's son-in-law Cossien Aly Khan at Fort William, to consult with them on this pressing occasion. The old Nabob consented to this request, and sent him. On his arrival the sentiments and resolutions of the Governor and Council were made known to him immediately; and he was so well convinced, after a few conferences, of the equity and sincerity of their intentions, and so much approved the prudence of their councils, that he at once agreed to assist them in the execution of them. After a short stay at Fort William, he returned again to his father, to prepare him to receive the determination he himself had agreed to.

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Soon after his departure, Mr. Vansittart the Governor, and Colonel Caillaud, followed him to Muxadabad, taking with them an escort of two hundred Europeans, and one battalion of Seapoys, both for their own protection, and likewise, if occasion required, to enforce that reformation, which they were sensible, both for the service and safety of the Nabob and the company, and for the publick utility, it was indispensably requisite to establish. The Nabob had a meeting with the Governor and the Colonel, to advise with them for the support of himself and government, whose strength languished daily, and whose decay was not only prejudicial to itself, but, as their interest had been so long and intimately connected, was also imparted to the affairs of the company.

The Governor, after a friendly introduction, delivered to the Nabob three papers, wherein were displayed, with equal propriety and clearness, the misfortunes his kingdom laboured under; the precarious dependance on which he himself held his authority, every hour insulted, and in danger shortly of being despised and trampled on, through the male-administration of ministers,

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sters, whom he had advanced to this degree of trust and power from being his menial servants. In them were represented the importunate cries of his injured subjects, oppressed by these ministers, by famine, by the confusions of the country, and by war, which had over-run the kingdom, to the utter ruin of the province of Bahaar, and which might, but from his own imprudence, have been terminated long before, but which still continued, and was likely to continue to rage with more violence than ever.

The means by which these errors might be retrieved, were comprised in a few articles.

The absolute removal of his present ministers was the first point enforced; and as the Nabob confessed himself, through the infirmities of age and grief, incapable of disengaging himself from the perplexities which every where embarrassed him, it was recommended to him to fix the administration of the government in the hands of Cossen Aly Khan, his son-in-law, whom he had long before expressed an intention of raising to the honours and dignities of his late son; that the forces should be paid

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their arrears; that the people should be eased of their oppressions; finally, that certain lands in the districts nearest to Fort William should be assigned over to the company, to reimburse them the charges of paying their armies, their artillery, and other military expences, and to enable them also to restore in some degree their declining commerce.

The Nabob heard, and promised attentively to reflect, and to give an early answer to these articles: but no sooner had he parted from the Governor, than, instead of expressing the least regard to them, he instantly entered again into close consultation with his old counsellors how to elude them, and disclosed every thing which had passed between the Governor and himself. The result of this was, that they inspired him with such a hatred and jealousy of his son-in-law, because recommended to him by the English, that Cossen Aly Khan could not any longer think himself secure from his resentment, nor ever afterwards ventured to approach his presence. & The Nabob also declared, that could he this time by any means deceive them, he would trust the English no more, and would take
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care to be sufficiently guarded against them for the future. In fine, he absolutely refused to consent that the least alteration should be made. There was no other way now remaining to bring the Nabob to any reasonable terms, than by endeavouring to act upon his fears; a measure which his son-in-law readily espoused. No better or more convenient time could offer, than what the next night presented, being the conclusion of the Gentoo feast, when every considerable person of that sect would be fatigued with the tedious performances of their religious ceremonies.

Colonel Caillaud therefore, as soon as the night approached, marched his troops into the city; where, as had been concerted, he joined Cossen Aly Khan with his forces, and when the dawn appeared, they surrounded the Nabob's palace; while at the same time detachments were sent to secure the persons of his three ministers. The Governor, solicitous that no blood should be spilled on this occasion, had sent a letter to the Nabob by the Colonel's hands, to be delivered at a proper season, in which he laboured to persuade him to acquiesce in those demands, which necessity required
should

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should be complied with. When the Colonel had drawn up a party of his troops within the court of the palace, he sent in the letter. Upon perusal of it, upon the knowledge that his ministers were seized, and upon perceiving his palace was beset by English troops, the Nabob burst into the most violent fit of rage, denounced vengeance again on the English, threatened he would make all the resistance in his power, and that he would never yield the terms demanded, but with his life. However, this start of passion availing nothing, soon subsided. After an hour's intent meditation, when his mind was become calm, he desired the Colonel might attend him. The Colonel did so, and was detained a long time by the Nabob, which he employed in urging to him how vain all resistance must be, and that in the end he would be compelled to yield; and he was at last convinced that his persisting was to little purpose. Yet, after all, he remained inflexible in refusing the offers made to him; and instead of assenting, as was hoped and expected, he, in a transport of anger and despondency, threw up every thing in despair, and declared he would from that instant relinquish
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the government entirely, conditioning only that security should be given for the preservation of his life. He added, he would have no longer concern in the government, after an attempt like this, and that he too well knew the disposition of mankind, and of his countrymen, to think of trusting himself near Cossen Aly Khan, from whom he was convinced his life must be in perpetual danger. To this resolution he firmly adhered; and though the Governor came to him, and gave him the strongest assurances, that not only his life was safe, but his government too, of which he must be truly sensible it was never intended to deprive him, yet he remained fixed in his determination, and only requested that he might be immediately sent down to Fort William, where he wished to reside under the English protection (for he had lost all other) in privacy and repose. The Nabob thus renouncing the government, to which no persuasions could recall him, Cossen Aly Khan, his son-in-law, assumed the title and authority of his father; and as his first act of power, for the services the English had performed, he granted them all the advantages stipulated for the company. Every person

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person of consideration in the city came to pay their respects to the new Nabob a few hours after his accession. The people of all classes appeared extremely pleased with this revolution, and the whole city was the same day as composed and quiet, as if nothing uncommon had happened; nor was there perhaps ever so considerable an alteration of so great and extensive a government brought about with less disturbance, or with more satisfaction to a people in general.

The next day the old Nabob, agreeably to his own desire, was sent from the city to Fort William, attended by a strong escort of Europeans to protect his person from the insults of the people; and he was permitted to take with him all his private effects, his women, jewels, treasure, and whatever else he thought proper; and he now resides at Fort William, supported by a very considerable income from his son.

The happy effects of this event have already been experienced. Many of the superfluous forces are reduced, by which means the Nabob is able to pay the necessary remainder; many oppressions have been lightened, many grievances reclaimed, and many injuries redressed.

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But, among all these publick benefits, the emoluments derived to the company are great and important. The departments of Burdwan, Midnapoore, and Chittagonge, a tract of country reaching from the entrance of the Ganges on either side the river almost to Muxadabad, bounded by Dacca and Arraccan to the East, and extending two degrees beyond the Ganges to the West, is now the English territory in Bengal; a region, the annual produce of whose revenues amounts to six hundred thousand pounds. The Nabob and company have entered into the most strict and mutual engagements of alliance, offensive and defensive, which have the best appearance of remaining firm, from the interest each of them have to observe them. By this the company is secure, the Nabob's government established, and in a fair way of becoming great and flourishing.

F I N I S.



